

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5-7 and 9-11 are pending in the application. Claims 1-2, 5-6, 7 and 9 have been amended. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the amendments to the claims and the following remarks.

I. The § 103 Rejections

Claims 1-3, 5-7 and 9-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable by U.S. Patent No. 5,634,072 ("Allen") in view of applicant's admitted prior art. Applicant respectfully traverses.

Claim 1 recites a method for providing access to a resource in a programming environment supporting concurrent tasks. In particular, the method includes providing a latch to a first task and accessing a resource with the first task. After the step of accessing the resource, the latch is marked stealable rather than being released. Marking the latch stealable permits a second task to acquire the latch in response to the latch being marked stealable.

An advantage of such a method includes a potential efficiency resulting from an ability for a task to reaccess a resource without the need to fully release and reacquire a latch (specification page 3, lines 15-18). In response to the latch being marked stealable, a second task can acquire or "steal" the latch (specification page 6, lines 19-20).

A. Allen Fails To Disclose Marking a Latch Stealable Permits a Second Task to Acquire the Latch In Response to the Latch Being Marked Stealable

Allen discloses a method and system for managing one or more coupling facilities in a data processing system. In the Action mailed August 10, 2005, the Examiner, however, recognizes that Allen does not disclose marking a latch stealable. Consequently, Allen fails to

disclose marking a latch stealable permits a second task to acquire the latch in response to the latch being marked stealable.

B. Applicant's Admitted Prior Art Fails To Disclose Marking a Latch Stealable Permits a Second Task to Acquire the Latch In Response to the Latch Being Marked Stealable

As discussed in the background section of applicant's specification, certain prior art systems permit a latch-holding task to continue to hold a latch rather than relinquishing the latch once the task is finished using a resource. While the prior art systems permit a latch-holding task to continue to hold a task, the prior art systems do not mark a latch stealable – in that a second task can “steal” the latch in response to the latch being marked stealable. Instead, the prior art systems poll the latch to determine if there are any tasks that have requested the latch. Any second tasks cannot acquire the latch until the latch-holding task polls the latch (specification page 2, lines 18-21). Applicant's admitted prior art, therefore, fails to disclose marking a latch stealable permits a second task to acquire the latch in response to the latch being marked stealable, as recited in claim 1 (emphasis added).

C. The claim has limitations not taught by either reference

Both Allen and applicant's admitted prior art fail to disclose marking a latch stealable permits a second task to acquire the latch in response to the latch being marked stealable. Consequently, the combination of Allen and applicant's admitted prior art cannot render claim 1 obvious.

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In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the claims 1-3, 5-7 and 9-11 are allowable over the cited references, and are in condition for allowance. Should any unresolved issues remain, Examiner is invited to call Applicant's attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,
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